

174 MILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND  
REFORMER

Later, when Zola became a candidate for the French Academy, Dumas *Jils* was one of his most consistent supporters.<sup>1</sup> Jules Claretie also evinced an equally forgiving disposition.

As for Zola, his literary views certainly became more liberal as he grew older; but at the period one has now reached he was in his most arbitrary and dogmatic mood, going so far as to suggest in a pamphlet that each *regime* must have its appropriate literature, that Naturalist literature alone was suited to the Republic, and that the Republic itself must prove Naturalist, or otherwise would assuredly collapse. "By Naturalism," said he, "I mean analytical and experimental methods based on facts and human documents. There must be agreement between the social movement, which is the cause, and literature, which is the effect. If the Republic, blind as to itself, and failing to understand that it exists by the force of a scientific formula, should begin to persecute that formula in literature, this would be a sign that the Republic is not ripe for facts, and that it must once again give place to one, that is dictatorship."

The pamphlet we have quoted was issued early in 1879. Some months previously both Gustave Flaubert and Alphonse Daudet, being well acquainted with M. Age\*<sup>nor</sup> Bardoux, an Auvergnat poetaster and politician

appointed  
Minister of Public Instruction, had suggested to  
him that  
Zola, who by "L'Assommoir" had now risen to  
a con-  
ference to the Paris letters in the first volumes of the "  
Illustrated Sporting  
and Dramatic News" will show that the writer at one time  
dealt largely with  
the French stage. In that connection he was fortunate  
enough to secure the  
favour of Dumas *fils* to whom he was indebted for many  
little kindnesses.

<sup>1</sup> Zola to Yizetelly, November, 1898.

<sup>2</sup> "La République Française et la Littérature," 8vo,  
Paris, Charpentier,  
1879. The text of this pamphlet was added by Zola to  
the collection of  
papers entitled "Le Roman Experimental," which he  
issued in 1880.